DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 923 FL 023 104

AUTHOR Little, David; And Others
TITLE Report on the ESF-Funded Project to Consolidate and Develop Foreign Language Modules for Students of Other Disciplines Implemented October 1, 1993-September 30, 1994.
INSTITUTION Dublin Univ. Trinity Coll. (Ireland). Centre for Language and Communication Studies.
PUB DATE Oct 94
NOTE 30p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Second Language Programs; College Students; Distance Education; Foreign Countries; French; German; Higher Education; Language Proficiency; *Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; Second Language Instruction; *Second Language Learning; Student Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS *Ireland

ABSTRACT

This report presents the development and results of a 1-year foreign language module program of 15-weeks duration for university students in the arts, commerce, science, and engineering. The project's central concern was to develop and test a general model for the delivery of foreign language teaching to students of other disciplines. The program included audio-video learning units, satellite television facilities, and computers. Modules were designed to engage students in immediate, active language use and practice of the target language (German or French) to provide a solid foundation in basic speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills; classes focused on broadly defined domains of communicative activity. Assessment took place in weeks 5 and 6 and involved 113 students. Results indicate that students completing the modules attained a satisfactory level of language competence as measured by deployment of communicative skills and general underlying proficiency. External evaluators rated the project as successful as well. Special funding permitted the modules to be continued for a second year. Appendixes include a list of related publications, an outline of the French language module for students of health sciences, a summary of expenditures (in British pounds), band descriptors and rating sheet, and a correlational analysis of test components. (NAV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 386 923

Report on the ESF-Funded Project to Consolidate and Develop Foreign Language Modules for Students of other Disciplines Implemented by the Centre for Language and Communication Studies
1 October 1993-30 September 1994

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. G.

Little

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

FL023164

University of Dublin • Trinity College

Report on the ESF-funded project to consolidate and develop foreign language modules for students of other disciplines implemented by the Centre for Language and Communication Studies 1 October 1993–30 September 1994

Contents

1	**Introduction** David Little, Director, CLCS	1.1 The Centre for Language and Communication Studies	2
		1.2 Background to CLCS's language modules project	2
		1.3 The launch of CLCS's language modules project	3
2	**Implementation** Ema Ushioda Project co-ordinator	2.1 Consolidation of existing language modules	4
		2.2 Recruitment of students to take the new modules	4
		2.3 Rates of participation	5
		2.4 Design of the new modules	7
		2.5 Design of assessment procedures	9
		2.6 Assessment results	11
3	**External evaluation** Edith Esch and Anny King Language Centre University of Cambridge	3.1 Introduction	13
		3.2 Design of the pilot project	13
		3.3 The pilot project in the context of language learning provision in higher education in Europe	14
		3.4 Management of the project	15
		3.5 Evaluative approach adopted for the project	16
		3.6 Recommendations for the future	16
		Notes	17
4	**Conclusion** David Little	4.1 Response to the external evaluators' recommendations	18
		4.2 Provision of language modules in 1994-5	18
		4.3 Research dimensions	19
		4.4 The future	20
	Appendices	1 Applied linguistic research in CLCS	22
		2 French module for students of Health Sciences	24
		3 Summary of expenditure	25
		4 Band descriptors and rating sheet	26
		5 Correlational analysis of test components	28

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1 Introduction

David Little

1.1 The Centre for Language and Communication Studies

The Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS) was established in 1978 as a special development associated with the commissioning of Trinity College's new Arts and Social Sciences Building.

From the beginning CLCS has had a threefold function: (i) to provide technical support for language teaching and learning; (ii) to engage in theoretical and applied linguistic research; and (iii) to develop an appropriate teaching role.

For a number of years CLCS has provided courses in theoretical and applied linguistics at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. In Trinity term 1990 the University Council made CLCS responsible for co-ordinating the provision of language teaching for students not taking a foreign language as part of their degree programme. The project that is the focus of this report represents CLCS's first involvement in language teaching on a large scale.

Over the past fifteen years applied linguistic research in CLCS has focussed on many different aspects of language learning and language teaching, including: self-access and self-instruction; learner autonomy; interactive video for language learning; the definition of language teaching syllabuses; the development of language learning materials; pedagogical grammar; the development of the second language mental lexicon in learners at university level; the age factor in language learning; the role of the mother tongue in language learning (Appendix 1, pp.22f. below, lists a selection of relevant publications).

At every stage CLCS's language modules project has been informed by one or another strand of relevant applied linguistic research, and as it has proceeded it has generated research dimensions of its own. It is worth emphasizing that this is by no means a common occurrence. Even in universities language teaching of the kind described in this report is all too often treated as a service provision which neither needs nor deserves the benefits of theoretical and empirical research.

1.2 Background to CLCS's language modules project

In Trinity term 1993 the Higher Education Authority announced an ESF-funded pilot project for the restructuring of primary degrees and invited proposals from the universities. One of the three measures to be implemented was the introduction of foreign language modules for students in the Faculties of Arts, Commerce, Science and Engineering.

In its submission to the HEA Trinity College proposed (i) to consolidate language modules already offered by enhancing the facilities available to support them, and (ii) to establish new language modules.

As regards consolidation, by the academic year 1992-3 the following courses stood to benefit from the proposed project:

- in the Faculty of Business, Economic and Social Studies, partly integrated two-year courses in French (non-beginners) and German (non-beginners), taken by students in their junior and senior freshman (first and second) years;
- in the Faculty of Engineering and Systems Sciences, partly integrated two-year courses in French (non-beginners) and German (beginners and non-beginners), taken by students in their senior freshman and junior sophister (second and third) years;
- in the Faculty of Science, a non-integrated two-year course in German (beginners and

non-beginners), taken by students in their senior freshman and junior sophister years.

As regards new modules, the project's central concern was to develop and test a general model for the delivery of foreign language teaching to students of other disciplines. In other words, it was to be a major concern of the project to lay down firm foundations for the future development of the undergraduate curriculum in this area. The proposal submitted to the HEA included the following new modules:

- French for non-beginners in Science;
- French for non-beginners in Arts;
- German for beginners in Arts;
- German for non-beginners in Arts.

A self-access programme in German for Science students was among the language modules already provided in Trinity College (see above), and for this reason the College's proposal did not include German for Science students among the new modules. However, scarcely any Science students enrolled in the existing programme at the beginning of the academic year 1993-4, so the following new modules were added to the project:

- German for beginners in Science;
- German for non-beginners in Science.

The fact that only French and German were provided for is a reflection of the dominance of these two languages in the school curriculum and in relation to ERASMUS student exchange programmes. The latter dominance emerged clearly in a survey of foreign language needs that was undertaken in Michaelmas term 1990 by the Director of CLCS in consultation with faculty deans. The situation had not changed when the exercise was repeated in Hilary term 1993.

Students in the Faculty of Health Sciences were not included in the population targeted by the HEA's pilot project. However, in Michaelmas term 1993 the Faculty asked CLCS to provide a French module for non-beginners in Hilary and Trinity terms 1994 in order to support ERASMUS exchanges with institutions in France. The Faculty financed the module, which was organized within the general framework established for the ESF-funded modules. For purposes of comparison, a brief report on rates of participation and assessment results is provided in Appendix 2, p.24 below.

1.3 The launch of CLCS's language modules project

The proposal that Trinity College submitted to the HEA was based on a budget for 1993–4 of £168,000 and the assumption that additional accommodation could be made available to house new technical installations. In the event, the HEA awarded the project a grant of £100,000 and no additional accommodation could be made available.

The project was launched with the approval of the University Council early in Michaelmas term 1993. Ema Ushioda was appointed project co-ordinator, Marc Gallagher was appointed pedagogical adviser, and Dr Edith Esch and Anny King of the Language Centre, University of Cambridge, were appointed external evaluators.

The funding period of the project was from 1 October 1993 to 30 September 1994. Appendix 3, p.25 below, provides a summary of expenditure.

2 Implementation

Ema Ushioda

2.1 Consolidation of existing language modules

Before the project began CLCS offered the following technical support for language learning:

- an audio-active-comparative language laboratory of 40 booths, used almost exclusively for self-access learning;
- an audio-active-comparative language laboratory of 20 booths, used almost exclusively for class teaching;
- a network of 12 computers, used almost exclusively for class teaching;
- 3 individual satellite television viewing facilities offering broadcasts in French, German and Russian.

Trinity College's proposal to the HEA included the provision of 20 individual video playback and satellite television viewing facilities, to be installed in a room of their own. But since no additional accommodation was available, it was necessary to expand and enhance technical support for language learning within existing accommodation. Obviously, it was important to find space for new facilities and functions without disrupting well-established patterns of class teaching and self-access learning. At the same time, the decision was taken to expand not only individual video playback and satellite television viewing but also computer facilities, since the project offered an opportunity to open the network to self-access learning.

The following measures were taken prior to the launch of the new modules in Hilary term 1994:

- The 12 booths arranged in pairs along the right-hand wall of the large language laboratory were removed. Five of them were added to the main block of 28 booths on the left-hand side of the laboratory, giving a total of 33 booths for self-access learning; five more were added to the small language laboratory, increasing its capacity to 25; and the remaining two booths were put into storage.
- 15 individual video playback and satellite television viewing facilities were installed along the right-hand wall of the large language laboratory. In addition, adjustments were made to the distribution system for satellite television signals to allow a maximum of ten signals to be delivered to the large language laboratory via a single cable. This not only simplified the installation of the new facilities but opened up the possibility of making broadcasts in languages other than French, German and Russian available at relatively low cost in due course.
- The existing Nimbus computer network was reduced from 12 to 10 machines and a second network of 10 PCs was installed in the same room. Purpose-built furniture was bought for the two networks.
- Since any expansion of self-access activity raises new security problems, surveillance cameras were installed in the two language laboratories and the computer room, and a monitor in the main CLCS office.
- Finally, the main CLCS office was completely reorganized to accommodate the project co-ordinator, the pedagogical adviser and the additional language learning resources generated by the project.

2.2 Recruitment of students to take the new modules

The new modules were scheduled to begin in the first week of Hilary lecture term 1994, in order to allow sufficient time for planning, publicity and recruitment during Michaelmas lecture term.

The modules could not be accommodated within the normal lecture timetable, so it was agreed with the respective faculty deans that they would run on Saturday mornings from 10

a.m. to 12 noon for students in Science, and on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. for students in Arts.

It was also agreed that the modules would be offered to all junior freshmen in Science, and to all junior and senior freshmen in Arts. An important consideration was the fact that the opportunity to undertake study abroad is generally offered to students in their second or third year. In the final stages of recruitment, however, places remaining were offered to the rest of the undergraduate population in Science and Arts — i.e., senior freshmen and sophister (third and fourth year) students in Science, and sophister students in Arts.

For students in Arts, it was agreed that priority should be given to those not studying a foreign language as a degree subject, though within the Two-subject Moderatorship there seems no good reason in principle why a student combining German with history should be prevented from reviving her French with a view to studying history at a French-speaking university.

The modules were publicized in two ways. For junior freshmen in Science, a general meeting was held in Week 5 of Michaelmas term (on 12 November 1993), and was attended by an estimated 150 out of a possible total of 227 students. For junior and senior freshmen in Arts, a two-day information and recruitment session (18 and 19 November) was held. This was publicized by means of posters which heads of department were asked to display on departmental noticeboards.

Applications were processed on a "first come first served" basis, the minimum requirement for those applying for non-beginners' modules being a Leaving Certificate (or equivalent) qualification in their chosen language.

The notional maximum number of students to be admitted to each module was 50, which yielded a maximum of 300 students across the six modules—approximately a quarter of the total freshman population in Science and Arts. In practice, admissions were handled flexibly to balance the numbers between over-subscribed and under-subscribed modules. There was a particularly high demand for the French modules (see Table 2.1, p.6 below).

Applications were also accepted from 14 students who did not belong to that part of the population targeted by the project, but who had expressed a strong interest in the modules and had applied in the early stages of recruitment. These included students from the Faculty of Engineering and Systems Sciences and the Faculty of Business, Economic and Social Studies, as well as a small number of postgraduate students. For the purposes of the project statistics, however, these students were treated as supernumeraries and not included in the monitoring of participation figures.

2.3 Rates of participation

The new modules began in the first week of Hilary lecture term 1994, and ran for a total of 15 weeks to the end of Trinity lecture term. In order to monitor rates of participation, regular attendance records were kept for the weekly contact sessions. In the early weeks of Hilary Term, the rate of withdrawal was to some extent matched by late admissions and participation by a handful of unregistered students in the contact sessions. As places became available, these students were officially admitted to the modules.

In Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1, p.6 below, the rate of weekly participation is expressed as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled for each module. This includes confirmed and unconfirmed withdrawals, as well as week-by-week increases through late admission of applicants during Hilary Term. These increases explain why the total recruitment figure for all six modules exceeds the initial maximum of 300 students referred to in 2.2. It should be added that minor adjustments in the numbers enrolled are also due to transferrals by a few students from one module to another (e.g., from German for beginners to German for non-beginners, or from Saturday mornings to Wednesday evenings).

Although the participation levels showed a steady decline from the initial high rates of attendance, the general picture which emerges seems on the whole very positive when put into perspective. It was expected that the decline

Module	Initial total recruitment	Number attending first session	Final total recruitment	Number completing module
French non-beginners in Arts (Wednesday)	70 Arts 2 Science	58 (81%)	76	22 (29%)
French non-beginners in Science (Saturday)	78 Science 1 Arts	70 (89%)	85	32 (38%)
German non-beginners in Arts (Wednesday)	32 Arts	30 (94%)	38	11 (29%)
German non-beginners in Science (Saturday)	44 Science 2 Arts	41 (89%)	47	29 (62%)
German beginners in Arts (Wednesday)	45 Arts 1 Science	32 (70%)	47	13 (28%)
German beginners in Science (Saturday)	26 Science	22 (85%)	27	6 (22%)

Table 2.1

Rates of participation in French and German modules

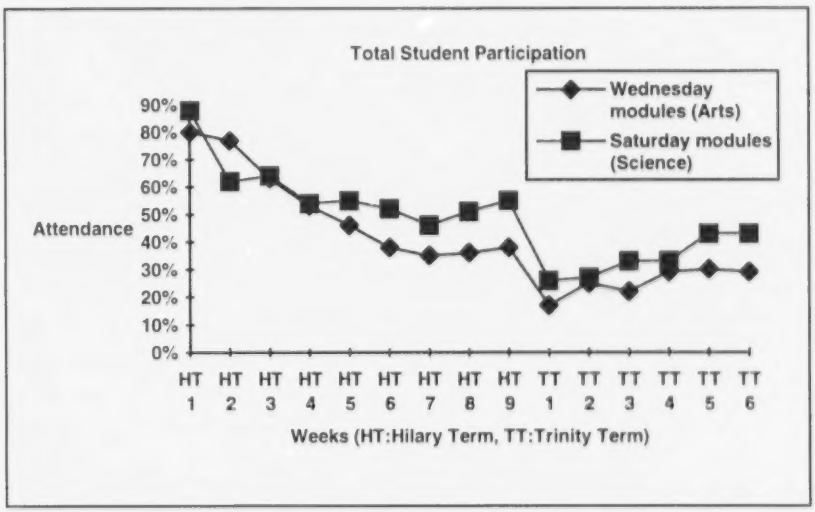

Figure 2.1

would be steeper in the early weeks of the modules, and this proved to be the case. As Figure 2.1 shows, the rate of attendance tended to level off about the middle of Hilary term. A further drop in participation was expected in Trinity term, with the onset of examination pressures from the students' main subjects of study. While participation rates were lower in Trinity than in Hilary term, attendance during Trinity term nevertheless remained steady. Indeed, it showed a slight upward trend towards the end of the modules. In all, 113

students underwent assessment in Weeks 5 and 6 of Trinity term.

As Figure 2.1 clearly shows, a higher rate of participation was maintained for the Saturday morning than for the Wednesday evening modules, even though attendance on Saturdays was sometimes affected by the scheduling of field-trips. Two possible reasons for this difference in participation levels may be inferred. Feedback from students who withdrew from the modules indicated that the pressure of a full timetable was the most common cause, cited by over 70% of those who provided explanations for dropping out. With the normal college lecture timetable stretching from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and sometimes 7 p.m. for students in Arts, it seems probable that the strain of a further two-hour midweek evening session proved too great for many students who embarked on the Wednesday evening modules. In contrast, physical or mental fatigue was less likely to be a contributing negative factor on Saturday mornings, once students had committed themselves to devoting this period of their week to language study.

It should also be noted that students in Science (Saturday morning modules) were given the incentive that extra percentage points would be added to their end-of-year examination results if they did well in the language modules.

The differing rates of participation on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings suggest that two important issues would need to be addressed if the language modules were to be fully integrated into the primary degree structure: (i) a reduction in students' workload to compensate for the extra demands of language learning; and (ii) integration of the grade achieved into students' end-of-year examination result.

2.4 Design of the new modules

Each module involved students in two contact hours per week. In addition they were encouraged to devote a further hour each week to self-access learning.

Learners' needs—Because of time constraints it was not possible to undertake a needs analysis survey among the target student population. Instead, students' needs were defined in terms of the general rationale underlying the proposed restructuring of primary degrees. In the short term this entailed the development of basic communication skills for the purposes of study, travel or work experience abroad during students' undergraduate years. In the longer term it entailed the development of practical language skills to enhance students' academic qualifications, vocational prospects and potential for future mobility. Added value and future mobility were highlighted in the publicity for the modules.

Course design—In accordance with the short-term needs specified above, the modules were designed to engage students in immediate active use and practice of their target language so as to provide them with a solid foundation in basic speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. One of the reasons why so many language teaching programmes fail to make a long-term impact on their learners is that they do nothing to make them users of their target language. Perhaps the easiest way to ensure that language learners become language users is to employ the target language as the medium of classroom management and instruction. This procedure has the added advantage that it increases the amount of target language "input" that learners receive and interactively stimulates the "digestion" of that input.

Classes focussed on broadly defined domains of communicative activity so as to provide a meaningful context within which to develop, recycle and extend the students' range of functions, notions, lexis and grammar, and promote productive and receptive skills.

For the beginners' German modules, these domains of communicative activity corresponded to the practical demands of survival in a German-speaking environment, such as basic greetings and social interactions, travel, obtaining food and drink, and finding accommodation, and gradually progressed towards dealing with bureaucracy and taking an interest in cultural issues and current affairs.

For the non-beginners' modules, the domains of communicative activity moved through three phases: (i) consolidation of basic communicative skills for everyday survival and social needs; (ii) refinement of expressive and interactive skills for effective involvement in social and study environments abroad; (iii) development of spoken and written discursive skills and

extended listening skills for the purposes of study abroad, using academically appropriate subject matter.

Contact sessions were initially structured so as to provide students with thematic exposition and organizational guidelines from the language teacher (30 minutes), followed by rotations between, on the one hand, small-group work with native speaker student assistants (30 minutes), and on the other, teacher-supervised self-access work using the language laboratory, computer laboratory, satellite television and video playback facilities (30 minutes). Sessions ended with a final integration and consolidation of the tasks and material covered with the teacher (30 minutes).

As things turned out, by the later weeks of Hilary term both teachers and students felt that a longer opening session could be more usefully exploited for task-based student activities deriving from the initial exposition. In addition, a number of more academically-focussed short talks were arranged for the final half-hour period during these weeks. These talks on science and arts topics were given by French- and German-speaking assistants as appropriate. Again it was felt that such talks could be more effectively deployed as expository material for listening input, leading to productive tasks integrating speaking and writing skills (e.g., asking questions, taking notes, summarizing). For these reasons, a modification was made to the two-hour structure of the contact session in Trinity term: a full hour was devoted to initial exposition leading to various task-based activities; in the second hour, students divided into small groups for work with native-speaker student assistants and self-access work.

Meeting learners' long-term needs—If a language teaching programme is to be of long-term benefit to students it must help them to improve the efficiency of their learning. In other words, it must seek to foster learner autonomy, encouraging students to accept responsibility for their learning and to develop an ever more finely tuned awareness of language and language learning. With a view in particular to students' long-term needs — viz., the enhancement of vocational prospects and future mobility — it was desirable to encourage the development of a capacity for continued learning on an independent basis through the remaining undergraduate years. It was hoped that this would be achieved through the integration of self-access learning in the modules.

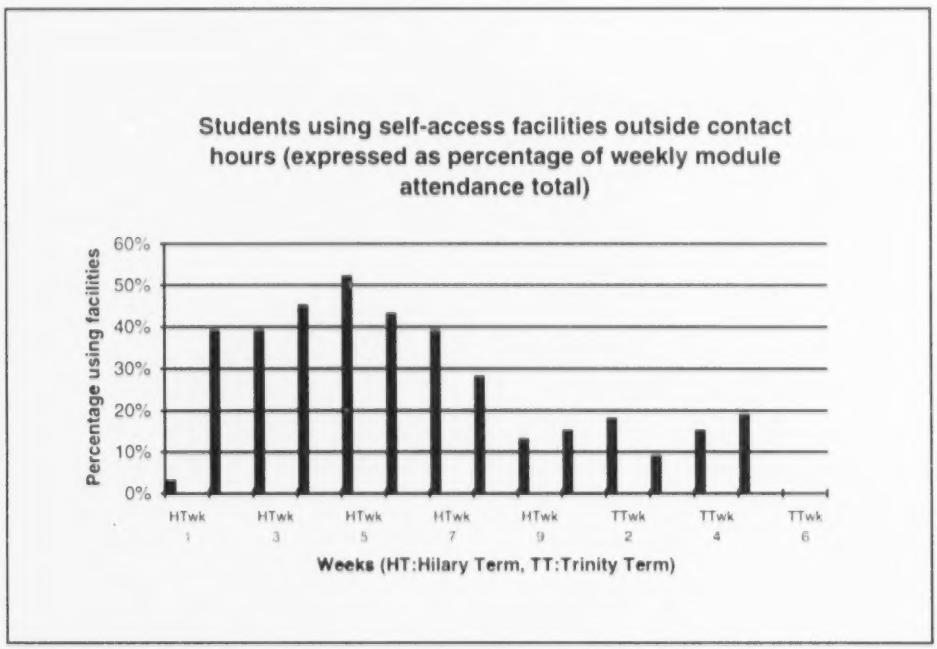

Figure 2.2

Self-access language learning facilities enable learners to make use of resources (e.g., printed material, audio and video tapes) and facilities (e.g., a language laboratory) on an individual basis and at times that fit in with their other commitments and activities. Ideally, self-access systems are supported by an advisory service that helps learners to determine their general learning strategy, select learning materials appropriate to their needs and interests, explore and refine their preferred methods of learning, and develop a capacity for self-assessment. Within the particular time constraints of the two-term modules in their pilot year, it was not possible to give self-access learning the high profile originally intended, although the overall rates of usage of CLCS's self-access facilities were encouraging (see Figure 2.2, p.8 above).

2.5 Design of assessment procedures

For the purposes of formal student assessment, two types of test were used—(i) a pencil-and-paper test to measure students' general underlying control of the target language system; and (ii) a communicative test to assess their ability to deploy their language skills interactively.

The pencil-and-paper test—For the pencil-and-paper test two instruments were chosen: a short dictation and a battery of four C-tests. A substantial body of empirical research has shown that both instruments are highly reliable indicators of global language proficiency.

The dictation was read by a native speaker and prerecorded for transmission via individual headphones in the language laboratory. It consisted of a 100-word text, read through at normal speed, then read phrase by phrase with each phrase repeated once, and finally read through once again at normal speed. The dictation was scored at two levels: one mark for each correctly transcribed word; half a mark for each phonologically approximate word.

The C-test is a modified form of the cloze test in which parts of words rather than whole words are deleted. The beginning of the text is left intact to provide a contextualizing lead-in, following which every second word has its second half deleted. A battery of four texts was chosen for each module, each text containing 25 deletions. The C-tests were scored for correct responses only.

In terms of cost-effectiveness, dictation and the C-test have the advantages (i) that they are easy to administer and to score, and (ii) that the same established battery of unseen texts can be used from year to year.

All five texts used in the pencil-and-paper test were authentic in origin, although for test purposes it was necessary to edit them slightly. The texts lay within the thematic range of material treated in the module in question, and were selected on the basis of an intuitive judgement that they were likely to present the more able students taking the module with no serious comprehension problems.

The communicative test—The communicative test was conceived as a short group presentation (5-6 minutes) in the appropriate language on a chosen topic, for performance in front of an audience made up of fellow students and four independent assessors. This form of assessment offered three advantages: economy; focus on deployment of communicative skills; and integration with the design and delivery of the modules.

The group format of the test provides a method of assessing the oral skills of a large number of students which is more efficient and cost-effective than individual interviews. The format of the presentation provides a natural vehicle for the deployment of acquired language skills in a meaningful and interactive context. Individual questioning of students following the presentation ensures that the assessment includes a judgement of spontaneous communicative ability.

The performance context has high face validity, since students could conceivably be called upon to perform similar types of tasks in their second language in a study or work environment abroad. Also, because preparation of the group presentations is integrated into the overall design and delivery of the modules, there is a direct correspondence between learning objectives and assessment of student performance. During the weeks leading up to the presentations, the group sessions with native-speaker student assistants were devoted to their preparation. During this period also, attention was given to the rhetorical skills that

students need in order to make an effective formal presentation.

The group assessment rating-scales were designed to incorporate a grade for each student's performance and an overall grade for collaborative group performance. Individual student performances were scored on a 5-band scale for each of three elements: phonology, fluency and grammatical control.

Group performances were given a single score on a 10-band scale for the quality with which content, vocabulary, language use, presentation and rhetorical skills were integrated in the collaborative execution of the task. A system of penalties was devised for group performances which failed to adhere to two principal criteria—viz., that the presentation must be interactive, and that students must not read from scripts. Groups failing to fulfil one of the two criteria were scored on bands 1–8 only, while groups failing to fulfil both criteria were scored on bands 1–6 only.

The scales employed in the assessment of both individual and group performances were defined by appropriate verbal band descriptors. In addition, the projected maximum global level of attainment for students was defined (see Appendix 4, pp.26f. below, for non-beginners rating-scales with full band descriptors and a sample rating-sheet).

It should be noted that the communicative test and the rating-scales were piloted at the end of Hilary term. The piloting entailed a statistical analysis of inter-rater reliability and detailed consultation with the external assessors (see also 3.5 below).

Validity and reliability—For this pilot phase of the modules, it was thought particularly important to assess the validity and reliability of the combined testing instrument. A statistical analysis was therefore carried out of (i) the degree of correlation between student results across the separate test components and (ii) the degree of inter-rater reliability in the communicative test conducted in Trinity term.

As regards the modules for non-beginners, the analysis of student results revealed moderate positive correlations between the communicative test and the pencil-and-paper test, suggesting that the assessment instruments chosen provided comparable measures of language proficiency, but that they were tapping different aspects of this proficiency. The statistical analysis thus supported the dual objectives of the two types of test, which were to assess ability to deploy communicative language skills on the one hand, and underlying knowledge of the target language system on the other.

The pattern of correlations between the communicative and pencil-and-paper test components was much weaker in the analysis of student results in the German beginners' modules. This was interpreted as a function of the type of language teaching to which the students had been primarily exposed. A strong emphasis on the development of basic oral and aural communicative skills meant that measures of communicative production were much less likely to be strongly correlated with more system-referenced measures of target language knowledge.

As expected, for all modules the analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between the parallel components of the pencil-and-paper test.

The analysis of inter-rater reliability in the communicative test revealed a very high level of agreement across the four independent raters in both French and German modules. Reliability coefficients of 0.89 or greater were obtained in the analysis of total test scores across raters, thereby sustaining confidence in the design of the testing instrument and rating-scales, and confirming the implementation of this mode of assessment in future modules, in conjunction with the pencil-and-paper test. A summary of the statistical analysis is given in Appendix 5, p.28 below.

Calculating grades—The overall grade for each student was calculated on the basis of performance in both the pencil-and-paper test and the communicative test. In view of the more direct correspondence between the group presentation and the content and learning objectives of the modules, the communicative and pencil-and-paper tests were weighted in the ratio of 3 to 2. Within the pencil-and-paper test the weighting of the C-test battery and dictation was in the ratio of 2 to 1, to reflect the proportions of time allowed for the completion of these components (40 minutes and 20 minutes respectively).

Fail	Fail	III	II.2	II.1	I
20% - 29%	30% - 39%	40% - 49%	50% - 59%	60% - 69%	70% - 80%

Band level	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5
Raw score		*30*	*40*	*50*	*60*	*70*	*80*	*90*	*100*

Table 2.2

Transposition of raw scores to classes of pass and fail (Arts students)

The use of a 5-band scale for the communicative test scores was designed to facilitate the transposition of students' total raw scores (i.e., combined communicative and pencil-and-paper test scores) to the four classes of pass and two classes of fail employed in the College's examination system. Table 2.2 shows the relation between the marks and classes used in Arts examinations and raw scores distributed across our five bands. An individual student's raw score was transposed to the Arts system of marks and classes by a simple formula: multiply by 0.6 and add 20.

In the Faculty of Science examinations are marked using the full percentage scale. Accordingly, for students in Science, the range of percentage grades attainable in the first class was expanded from 70–80% to 70–100%. The lower end of the scale would have been expanded downwards had any Science students failed the end-of-module examination.

Full integration of the modules within the primary degree curriculum was not attempted during this pilot year. However, the University Council determined that the grades achieved by students in their language module "should be presented as part of their annual examination result". In addition to the overall grade, students were given a more detailed breakdown of their attainment levels across the various skills. This information should help those students who intend to engage in further language learning.

2.6 Assessment results

As noted above, assessment took place in Weeks 5 and 6 of Trinity Term, and 113 students participated in the assessment process. The results are summarized in Table 2.3 below, which indicates the range of student performance in each module, and Figure 2.3, p.12 below, which conflates the results in a single histogram.

The results indicate that all students completing the modules attained a satisfactory level of language competence as measured in terms of (i) their deployment of communicative skills and (ii) their general underlying proficiency. Taken collectively, 62 (55%) of the 113 students completing the modules achieved a II.2 grade, while 49 (43%) achieved a II.1 grade.

Module	Student nos	Average mark	Highest mark	Lowest mark
French for non-beginners in Arts	20	60%	67%	52%
French for non-beginners in Science	34	57%	65%	51%
German for non-beginners in Arts	12	63%	69%	55%
German for non-beginners in Science	28	60%	70%	49%
German for beginners in Arts	13	65%	66%	51%
German for beginners in Science	6	57%	63%	50%

Table 2.3 — Assessment results (Arts and Science)

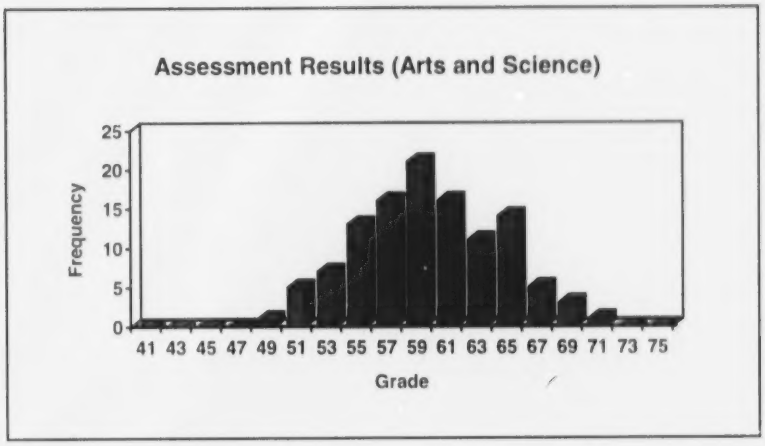
Assessment Results (Arts and Science)
Frequency
25
20
15
10
5
0
41 43 45 47 49 51 53 55 57 59 61 63 65 67 69 71 73 75
Grade

Figure 2.3

3 External evaluation

Edith Esch and
Anny King

3.1 Introduction

From the beginning of the project, it was agreed that as external evaluators we should fulfil a consultative role during its developmental stages, as well as offer a qualitative commentary on the project overall in terms of its design, management, outcomes and implications for the future. We were fully aware that the project's central concern was to establish a viable framework for the provision of foreign language teaching for non-language students, within particular budgetary and time constraints.

Our evaluation is based on observations made during our visits to Trinity College, our consultations with the project team, and the regular reports and student assessment results submitted to us. The evaluative report has five sections: design of the project; the project's significance in the wider context of higher education in Europe; project management; the evaluative approach adopted; and recommendations for the future.

3.2 Design of the pilot project

Has the programme achieved its primary aim of developing and testing a model for the delivery of foreign language teaching to students of other disciplines? In our view, the answer to this question is an emphatic "yes". We would like to draw attention in particular to the following aspects of the project design.

Language learning needs analysis and syllabus design—An effective and highly successful module design was implemented, shaped by flexibility and a firmly learner-centred approach within the framework of a specified syllabus content. One of the problems of designing a foreign language syllabus for students in non-language degree programmes is the difficulty of catering for varying levels of proficiency, as well as wide-ranging needs and interests. Students may quickly lose motivation if they do not perceive the language programme content to be appropriate or relevant to their needs. In these language modules, this problem was resolved through a flexible learner-centred approach to the selection of topics and the negotiation of learning activities and materials. The great range of interests displayed by student groups in their assessment presentations was strong evidence that such flexibility was important, since it would have been impossible to predict and designate appropriate topics and activities in advance.

The approach was clearly successful, both in maintaining high numbers of students across the modules despite the study pressures of their other subjects, and in producing excellent results among a multi-level mixed-ability population of non-specialist students. Outstanding success was evident in particular in the non-beginner modules, where the range of proficiency levels on entry differentiated between students more than in the beginner modules.

A very useful tool for the future would be a detailed account of the actual procedures whereby students' needs and the syllabus were brought together, topics and materials were selected, and learning activities were negotiated. It is clear that the constraints of time and student numbers during this pilot phase made such detailed documentation impossible. Nevertheless, given the success of the project this year, an information resource of this kind would be most valuable.

The modular concept—One of the fundamental concepts of the Council of Europe's modern languages projects is the design of learning units or "blocks" which are relevant to the communicative needs of

particular categories of learners. This concept was developed in the 1970s by Trim et al.[1] It is appropriate to refer to it here because the CLCS language modules demonstrated the pedagogical, methodological and institutional advantages that it offers.

Pedagogical advantages—From the point of view of the students, the modules offer learning targets which are meaningful, realistic and attainable within a relatively short period of time. By its very nature the module structure is far more likely to increase access to foreign languages than other programme designs. The enthusiastic response to the modules at the beginning of the year testifies to this.

Methodological advantages—Improving access to foreign languages "generally" is not sufficient. If it were, spending money on equipment would be enough. In our view the project showed particular strength in that it gave students access to a language learning method and to principles for managing their own learning. This was partly the result of the high degree of in-built flexibility for private study and the learner support provided. Above all, however, access to effective learning methods was gained through the task-based group work activities. These encouraged creativity and collaborative learning, produced some remarkable results, and integrated the processes of evaluation and peer-assessment.[2] This achievement is reflected in the success with which students worked together at the assessment stage. Its implications are far-reaching, since the acquired self-management skills and cooperative learning techniques are transferable to other domains, and will hopefully be deployed throughout students' lives.

Institutional advantages—The main institutional advantage of the modular structure of the pilot language programme is its flexibility. The modules are modifiable and transportable. For example, they could readily be adapted to a semester rather than trimester structure if necessary, and they could lend themselves to short intensive programmes compressed over a few days or weeks, although such schemes tend to have fewer long-term benefits than more extended courses. The modules could also be adapted by other institutions, or tailored to languages other than French or German.

A second institutional advantage lies in the likely integration of module development with the predicted rapid expansion of technical support in the future. For example, one can see the potential benefits of creating a readily accessible learner support system through the use of electronic mail, and of developing a flexible network of communication links of this kind with French- and German-speaking students in other institutions in Europe. Technical expansion through European high-speed information networks would also make available a range of CALL (computer-assisted language learning) and multimedia packages, such as those produced in the United Kingdom in the framework of the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme. Such materials could be used as learning/teaching resources and integrated into the modules, thus making it possible to offer language modules to larger numbers of students in Ireland. It is conceivable that such developments in the use of information technology will lead to its partial deployment in assessment procedures also.[3]

A third major advantage is that the language modules could lend themselves to the Council of Europe system of "credits"—i.e., qualifications which can be combined in a flexible fashion. The National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are recognized by employers in the United Kingdom, and may soon become valid throughout Europe under the Council of Europe system of credits. Validating the language modules in terms of NVQs would require time, research and effort, but would offer significant potential benefits and attractions to students, who would be able to "sell" their linguistic skills more easily on the national and European market alike. Such a project for the future seems highly desirable.

3.3 The pilot project in the context of language learning in higher education in Europe

Non-compulsory character of the modules—From our own experience at the University of Cambridge, we approve of the decision to offer the language modules on a voluntary enrolment basis. At Cambridge, non-compulsory French and German programmes

were introduced in the new four-year Engineering Tripos. The programmes included classes comparable in many ways to the language modules at TCD, and were offered during the first two years of the course. We found that student take-up of the language programmes was very high, and that although class attendance did show some decline through the year, about 60% of students in the first two years were involved.

However, one of the worrying problems in sustaining a non-compulsory scheme of this kind at third level is that it may not be funded properly. Lack of adequate funding has obvious repercussions on provision for staff recruitment and training, with the ultimate highly negative scenario in which foreign language programmes for non-language degree students are poorly taught and reduced to second-rate status in higher education.

The project was particularly successful in effectively deploying the guidance of two experienced teachers, the skills and talents of a small team of native speaker language tutors, and the enthusiasm and motivation of a large number of French and German student assistants. It would be regrettable if lack of funding meant that this combined team approach could not be sustained in future module development. It is not possible, for example, that native-speaker student assistants on their own, even with appropriate short-term training, could replace experienced and qualified teachers. This aspect needs to be carefully monitored and the issue of funding addressed.

Returning to the question of voluntary student enrolment, it seems that making foreign language learning compulsory may be counterproductive, in the short term at least. Potential employers are likely to respond more favourably to the evidence of real enthusiasm, effort and dedication shown by those who have participated voluntarily in language learning programmes, rather than to evidence of opportunism and the pre-packaged "flavour of the day" degree. On this front, Irish students seem to have an advantage over their United Kingdom counterparts because the bilingual context in which they have been brought up appears to have instilled positive attitudes to foreign language learning. Although they mostly share the same first language, the attitudinal pattern seems to be different among English students, according to the *Young Europeans in 1987* survey conducted by the European Commission.[4]

Integration into specialists' degrees—The language modules could be tailored to provide an access route for students aiming to specialize in European course options leading to Euro-careers. In the Cambridge course mentioned above, a European option which forms part of the new four-year engineering degree is available from the third year onwards. Students taking this option have to work on engineering projects through the medium of French and/or German and are assessed in these languages in their final examination. Making foreign language skills an entry requirement for students taking such courses would deny a large number of students access to these particular courses. Moreover, although all educated individuals ideally need to be able to survive in at least two other European languages, it is true that only a proportion of students will actually go for Euro-careers—all the more reason why access to courses with a European option should not be restricted at college entry level. The provision of language modules, on the other hand, gives students who have special motivation or talent for languages the chance to prepare themselves to take a special option of this kind in their third or final year.

Choice of French and German—The decision to offer modules in these particular languages makes sense not only for historical and cultural reasons, but more importantly for linguistic reasons. Knowledge of French gives access to Romance languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Catalan, and even to some extent Modern Greek. Knowledge of German of course gives access to Dutch, Luxemburgish and to a number of dialects spoken in Switzerland, Belgium and France. In this way, both languages offer direct access routes to a majority of the Indo-European languages spoken in the European Union. For students who already have a Gaelic language, knowledge of French/German thus gives an added bonus in the context of the European Union.

3.4 Management of the project

The management of the project was very good indeed. A timetable was established from the

beginning, and the overall design of the project was very clearly stated so that there were no ambiguities. As evaluators, we felt that we were given all the information we required, that everything was explicit and carefully planned, and that what we were asked to do met with our expectations of our role. Two points need a special mention for excellence.

Firstly, the log-book system used to keep us informed of week-by-week project development was implemented in a very effective way. Its narrative aspect provided easy and multiple "entry points" which made it possible for us as evaluators to move into the project quickly and effectively.

Secondly, the group assessment rating-grids were particularly well thought-out in terms of presentation and layout, as well as content. They were easy to understand, clear and explicit. This made it possible for any person not involved in the project to understand the structure and main categories for the implementation of the assessment instrument. We feel that CLCS should provide a "project management tool-kit" (on paper and diskette) to support and guide other institutions of higher education involved in similar projects.

3.5 Evaluative approach adopted for the project

We believe that the approach to project evaluation used here is to be recommended as a model of the genre. We certainly hope that it will be built upon and generalized in the profession.

We find that the process of formative as well as summative evaluation is an excellent approach. It saves an enormous amount of time and turns a so-called objective "judgement" into a cooperative search between respected colleagues for the best solution in a given context. We do not wish to imply that our evaluation was somehow "cosmetic", however. Evaluation developed rather as a constructive process whereby any problems or criticisms we raised could be discussed and dealt with immediately in a positive cooperative fashion.

This constructive process was best seen in the way in which commentary and feedback following the piloting of the group task assessment in Hilary term led to fine-tuning of the rating-grids and clarification of task criteria for the Trinity term assessment. In this way we believe we were able to ensure that our evaluation had maximum positive impact on project development while minimizing the face-threatening potential that our evaluative role might impose.

In the context of language programme development of this kind, we are convinced of the mutual benefits of such evaluative procedures both for the institution undergoing evaluation and also for the evaluators, who learn from the process as well. We are currently leading a Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) for the development of materials for language learning for Engineers and Scientists.[5] We were therefore able to apprise the CLCS team of our own findings, while they could alert us to particular types of common problems which we had not foreseen. In other words, project evaluation was definitely a valuable exercise for both institutions and countries.

3.6 Recommendations for the future

1 The project should lead to a consolidated programme of language modules.

2 A second-stage pilot should be conducted to include:
   (a) a detailed study of the module content and of the range of procedures used to match needs and syllabus.
   (b) a training module for all staff involved.
   (c) a study of the way the modules could be related to the NVQ scheme.

3 The consolidated programme should be generalized to include other disciplines and/or languages if required.

4 CLCS should plan to make information on the modules and their assessment available to other universities by means of advanced networking, such as Superjanet, between universities. Problems of infrastructure are crucial at this juncture if duplication is to be avoided.

5 CLCS should produce a project management tool-kit for the management of similar language programmes in other third-level institutions. This should include in particular an assessment procedure pack with all the rating-grids and explanations of what they do, how to use them, etc.

6 A promotional video should be produced of the group tasks performed by the students in Health Sciences, which could be included in the pack mentioned under 5, and used to train tutors and assistants, etc. Other video-recordings should be made to train staff in the use of the assessment rating-grids.

Notes

1 *Systems Development in Adult Language Learning*, Council for Cultural Cooperation, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1973.

2 Anny King's comment on the TCD medical students' performance was: "the result of non-specialist language teaching at its best". Students were using their specialist knowledge while being entertaining and imaginative in the second language. Moreover, there was evidence of the educational value of the exercise. The team effort had made students think about effective communication in a cooperative fashion: they had been using each others' special talents to best effect for the group.

3 Cf. publications of the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) and ALTER (Assessment of Learning through Technology for Efficiency and Rigour) published by the UK Universities' Staff Development Unit (USDU) and the Universities of Kent and Leeds.

4 *Young Europeans in 1987*, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 1988.

5 TLTP Project CKS33, a Cambridge-led consortium for the production of multimedia packages in French and German for Engineers and Scientists. The Cambridge Language Centre is in partnership with the Universities of Kent and Southampton for the production and with the Universities of Surrey and Durham for the evaluation.

4 Conclusion

David Little

4.1 Response to the external evaluators' recommendations

The CLCS project team accepts the recommendations made by the external assessors in 3.6 above.

The measures reported in section 4.2 below constitute acceptance of recommendation 1; while the three parts of recommendation 2 have been built into the organizational framework for 1994–5.

In the course of 1994–5 we plan to conduct a survey to establish what language learning needs exist in Trinity College beyond those covered by the modules we have developed to date (recommendation 3). Previous surveys have indicated that the demand for languages other than French and German is likely to be relatively low (see 1.2 above). If this finding is confirmed, it will have obvious implications for the ways in which these needs should be met.

We agree that it would be appropriate to make information on the modules and their assessment available to other universities (recommendation 4). As a first step in this direction, the present report will be distributed as widely as possible. Depending on the outcome of the Information Systems Policy Development exercise that Trinity College has been conducting during the academic year 1993–4, it may be possible in the fairly near future to make information about the modules available via advanced networking, as the external assessors recommend.

In the course of 1994–5 we plan to produce a project management tool-kit (recommendation 5) and to make video recordings for use in the training of teachers, assistants and assessors (recommendation 6).

4.2 Provision of language modules in 1994–5

Funding—In its original invitation to the universities to submit proposals for funding, the Higher Education Authority emphasized the pilot nature of the 1993-4 projects. Nevertheless, at various stages in the academic year 1993–4 the College was given to understand that funding would again be made available to support foreign language modules in 1994–5. It therefore came as an unwelcome shock when the HEA informed the College in July 1994 that no further funding would be available.

The success of the pilot language modules had been such that it was unthinkable to the CLCS project team that they should be abandoned without further ado. In any case, the need to provide foreign language learning opportunities for students is not diminished by funding difficulties.

Fortunately it has proved possible to offer (i) the modules that were piloted in 1993–4 to a new generation of students in 1994–5, but over three terms rather than two, and (ii) second-year modules to all students who successfully completed the pilot modules. CLCS has been able to draw on its own research and non-pay funding to provide the organizational basis for the modules, while the faculties involved have agreed to meet the cost of hourly-paid teaching. Material support costs (learning materials, printing, stationery, etc.) will be met by requiring each student who enrols for a language module in 1994–5 to pay a levy of £20.

It must be emphasized that these funding arrangements are an *ad hoc* response to an emergency, and that they entail the use of resources that will not be available in future years. They are thus no more than a very temporary solution to a problem that the College must solve in the course of 1994–5 if it

wishes to provide foreign language modules in the long term.

Organizational arrangements—An information sheet advertising the 1994–5 modules has been sent to all incoming junior freshmen in Arts, and similar publicity materials will be disseminated to incoming junior freshmen in other faculties during Freshers' Week (3–7 October 1994). Applications will be processed in the first two weeks of Michaelmas term, and the modules will begin in Week 3. As in 1993–4, preference will be given to applications from junior freshmen in Science and to applications from junior and senior freshmen in Arts. But as in 1993–4 we expect to be able to accommodate a small number of undergraduate students in other years as well as a few postgraduate students.

Student induction—The first two weeks of the 1994–5 modules will be given over to student induction. Students will be provided with information about the processes involved in foreign language learning and introduced to the self-access resources and facilities. Workshop activities will be used to explore appropriate approaches to learning, including the keeping of a regular log-book as a record of what work has been done, a compilation of what has to be learnt, and an assessment of how well learning is progressing.

Induction of teachers and ERASMUS student assistants—Early in Michaelmas term applications will be sought from ERASMUS students who wish to act as language assistants. All applicants will be screened for their suitability—in particular they will be asked to make a brief presentation in French or German as appropriate.

There will be formal meetings of teachers and ERASMUS students at the beginning and end of each term, and regular briefing and feedback sessions during term.

Learning materials and resources for self-access—The core learning materials for both new and continuing students have been prepared, including a student handbook for each term. The handbook contains course materials, advice on language learning in general and the use of self-access resources in particular, and templates and guidelines for students' log-books.

In the course of the year particular attention will be given to the development of resources to support the self-access component of the modules. Work in this area will benefit from exploratory visits made in 1993–4 to Paris and Frankfurt (Marc Gallagher), and to Wida Software, London (David Little, Ema Ushioda, Marc Gallagher). Provision will be made for the use of CD-ROM materials in CLCS's computer room.

In March 1994 David Little and Ema Ushioda visited the Media Center for Language and Culture, University of Amsterdam, which has begun to develop a computerized catalogue of self-access language learning materials. Work was subsequently begun on the development of a computerized catalogue for CLCS's materials, including a guide to their use. This project will continue in 1994–5.

4.3 Research dimensions

Section 1.1 of this report noted that the design and implementation of the pilot modules was able to draw on a strong research base in CLCS. This meant that the pilot modules rapidly generated a research dimension of their own, which will be continued in 1994–5 in five areas: assessment, interactive video for self-access language learning, learner autonomy, learner counselling, and the use of information systems and electronic communication in foreign language learning.

Assessment—At the Third CERCLES Conference, University of Hull, 23–25 September 1994, David Little and Ema Ushioda gave a paper reporting on the development and validation of the assessment instruments used at the end of the pilot modules, with particular reference to the group presentations. In 1994–5 these assessment instruments will be further developed to include a test of students' writing competence at the end of the second-year modules.

Interactive video for self-access—For a number of years CLCS has been working experimentally with interactive video for language learning in self-access. At EUROCALL 1994 in Karlsruhe, 15–17 September, David Little gave an invited keynote paper that elaborated the theoretical foundations of this

work, explored some data elicited from students, and set out a development plan for the future. In 1994–5 CLCS intends to refine its interactive video system further, with a view to giving it a central role in the self-access component of the language modules from 1995–6 onwards.

Learner autonomy—The fuller use of self-access resources will be influenced by David Little's continuing work on learner autonomy, which in 1993–4 included a study commissioned by the Council of Europe's modern languages project, two invited articles for international journals, and an invited keynote paper at an international conference on learner autonomy in Hong Kong. Pursuing a related line of research, Marc Gallagher gave a paper on learner autonomy at the Third CERCLES Conference, University of Hull, 23–25 September.

Learner counselling—A new research dimension is planned for 1994–5, focussing on the language learning process and learner autonomy. The intention is to develop a succession of instruments to elicit data from students at various stages in the academic year, and to analyse the data thus elicited in such a way as to provide individual students with guidance on the direction of their further language learning. The instruments will include a questionnaire on students' language background, a language aptitude test, measures of student attitudes and motivation, a C-test battery, and learner log-books.

This dimension of the project is closely related to the consultancy work David Little and Ema Ushioda have undertaken for the Centre for Modern Languages at the Open University, Milton Keynes.

Information systems and electronic communication—In the course of 1994–5 the project team will explore the feasibility of establishing an international research project to look into ways of exploiting electronic communication and electronic databases to support language learning. In particular, we hope that it may be possible to establish a triangular link between ourselves and universities in France and Germany, so that Irish learners of French and German can be put in touch with French- and German-speaking peers.

4.4 The future

At a formal institutional level Trinity College has been seriously interested in providing language learning opportunities for the generality of students at least since Trinity term 1990, when (as noted in the introduction to this report—see 1.1 above) the University Council made CLCS responsible for the co-ordination of efforts in this area.

The principal obstacle to the implementation of the proposals that were brought forward in Michaelmas term 1990 was lack of funding. This obstacle was temporarily overcome in 1993 by the sudden availability of special funding for the pilot project which is the subject of this report. As we move none too securely into the second year of the modules, two large issues have to be confronted: integration and long-term funding.

Integration—Integration can be approached in two ways. On the one hand foreign language modules can become integral parts of the curriculum in the sense that they are either compulsory for all students or else options that become compulsory for students who choose them. The obvious advantage of this approach is that there is no significant drop-out, which means that the organization of teaching can be finely calculated to be as cost-effective as possible. The disadvantage is that foreign language learning becomes one more subject of study, so that the provision of foreign language modules cannot reasonably be described as giving added value.

On the other hand, foreign language modules can be integrated in the weaker sense that they are designed to address students' needs in relation to their main academic discipline and related career options. The disadvantage of this approach is that there will always be a significant rate of attrition early in the academic year. The advantage—which should not be lightly dismissed (see the report of the external evaluators, 3.3 above)—is that students who follow an optional programme of language learning to its conclusion mostly do so because their learning is successful. This helps to explain the fact that all students who completed the 1993–4 pilot modules passed the end-of-year assessment; it also helps to explain why classes were so strongly cohesive and enjoyable.

Long-term funding—In Hilary term 1994 the question of the integration of foreign language modules was discussed by several Trinity College committees responsible for courses and their development. Each committee quickly came to the same conclusion: that the discussion was meaningless in the absence of guaranteed funding to support foreign language modules in the future.

As this report shows, a great deal of progress has been made in a very short space of time. What is more, that progress has been not simply in the provision of "service" language teaching, but in the beginnings of a solution to the problem of foreign language modules for all that started from a strong research base and has itself generated further research. This is by no means a widespread phenomenon, but it is surely one with which any university should be pleased.

As noted in 4.2 above, the foreign language modules that were piloted in 1993–4 will be offered again in 1994–5, and second-year modules will be offered to students who successfully completed the pilot modules. This has been possible thanks to special financial circumstances that have been created in part by the very fact of the special funding made available in 1993–4. However, it will not be possible to continue the modules beyond 1994–5 without the provision of at least some long-term funding security. How that is to be achieved must now be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Appendix 1

Applied linguistic research in CLCS: selected list of publications

Self-access and self-instruction

Devitt, S. M., D. G. Little, S. P. Ó Conchúir and D. M. Singleton, 1982-3: "Learning Irish with *Anois is Arís*". CLCS Occasional Paper No.6.

Little, D. (ed.), 1989: *Self-Access Systems for Language Learning*. With contributions from Edith Esch, Marie-José Gremmo, David Little, Harvey Moulden, Philip Riley and David Singleton. Dublin: Authentik.

Little, D. G., and A. J. Grant, 1986: "Learning German without a teacher: report on a self-instructional programme for undergraduate students of Engineering Science at Trinity College, Dublin, 1982-4", CLCS Occasional Paper No.14.

Learner autonomy

Little, D., 1991: *Learner Autonomy. 1: Definitions, Issues and Problems*. Dublin: Authentik.

Little, D., forthcoming: "Learner autonomy: a theoretical construct and its practical application", *Die Neueren Sprachen*.

Interactive video in language learning

Little, D., 1988: "Interactive video: teaching tool or learning resource?", *Journal of Applied Linguistics* 4 (Greek Applied Linguistics Association), pp.61-74.

Little, D. G., and E. J. Davis, 1986: "Interactive video for language learning: the Autotutor", *System* 14, pp.29-34.

Little, D., 1994: "Interactive videocassette for self-access: a preliminary report on the implementation of Autotutor II", *Computers in Education*, 165–170.

Definition of language teaching syllabuses

Little, D., H. Ó Murchú, and D. Singleton, 1985: *A Functional-Notional Syllabus for Adult Learners of Irish*. Dublin: Trinity College, Centre for Language and Communication Studies.

Little, D., H. Ó Murchú, and D. Singleton, 1985: *Towards a Communicative Curriculum for Irish*. Dublin: Trinity College, Centre for Language and Communication Studies, in association with Bord na Gaeilge.

Singleton, D. M., and D. G. Little, 1985: "Foreign languages at second level: defining a syllabus, with particular reference to the needs of the senior cycle". CLCS Occasional Paper No.12.

Development of language learning materials

Little, D., S. Devitt and D. Singleton, 1989: *Learning Foreign Languages from Authentic Texts: Theory and Practice*. Dublin: Authentik, in association with the Centre for Information on Language Teaching, London.

Pedagogical grammar

Little, D., 1994: "Words and their properties: arguments for a lexical approach to pedagogical grammar." In T. Odlin (ed.), *Perspectives on Pedagogical Grammar*, pp.99–122. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Little, D., and D. Singleton, 1991: "Authentic texts: pedagogic grammar and language awareness in foreign language learning". In *Language Awareness in the Classroom*, edited by C. James and P. Garrett, pp.123-32. London: Longman.

Second language mental lexicon

Singleton, D., and D. Little, 1991: "The second language lexicon: some evidence from university-level learners of French and German", *Second Language Research* 7, pp.61-81.

The age factor in language learning

Singleton, D. M., 1981: "Age as a factor in second language acquisition". CLCS Occasional Paper No.3.

Singleton, D. M., 1989: *Language Acquisition: the Age Factor*. Clevedon & Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Role of mother tongue and language transfer in language learning

Scarpa, F., 1990: "Contrastive analysis and second language learners' errors: an analysis of C-test data elicited from beginners in Italian". CLCS Occasional Paper No.27.

Singleton, D. M., 1981: "Language transfer: a review of some recent research". CLCS Occasional Paper No.1.

Singleton, D. M., 1987: "Mother and other tongue influence on learner French: a case study", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 9.3.

Singleton, D. M., 1987: "The fall and rise of language transfer". In *The Advanced Language Learner*, edited by J. Coleman and R. Towell. London: CILT.

Singleton, D. M., 1990: "The cross-linguistic factor in second language learning: a report on some small-scale studies recently conducted at the CLCS", CLCS Occasional Paper No.24.

Singleton, D. M., and D. G. Little, 1984: "A first encounter with Dutch: perceived language distance and language transfer as factors in comprehension". In *Language Across Cultures*, edited by L. Mac Mathúna and D. Singleton. Dublin: Irish Association for Applied Linguistics.

Appendix 2

French module for students of Health Sciences

Background

The French for non-beginners module for students in Health Sciences was launched in Hilary term a week later than the other modules, in order to allow sufficient time for the processing of applications. Two-hour contact sessions were arranged for Saturday mornings, starting at 9 a.m. The early start meant that both this and the French module for students in Science (starting at 10 a.m.) could be managed by a single team of teachers and language assistants. In terms of general design, content, organizational structure and assessment procedures, the module for students in Health Sciences followed a pattern identical to that already described.

Rates of participation

Initial total recruitment	Number attending first session	Final total recruitment	Number completing module
39	18 (47%)	39	9 (23%)

Assessment results

Number assessed	Average grade	Highest grade	Lowest grade
9	67%	82%	60%

The results indicate a particularly high level of attainment across the students completing the module, with an average grade in the upper range of the II.1 class, and a first class grade achieved by 4 of the 9 students. The difference in the level of performance between the students in Health Sciences and students in Arts or Science was especially salient in the quality of the group presentations. This difference is a clear reflection of the high standards of academic achievement required of those entering the Faculty of Health Sciences, many of whom have superlative school-leaving results in foreign languages. The success demonstrated by those completing the French for non-beginners module in 1994 points to the desirability of making further provision towards language learning opportunities for students in Health Sciences, ideally within the same funding scheme as that governing the modules for students in Arts and Science.

Appendix 3

Summary of expenditure

Staff		
Project co-ordinator and pedagogical adviser	27,100	
Hourly paid teachers (3 French, 3 German) and ERASMUS language assistants (13 French, 17 German)	10,204	
		37,304
Equipment		
Computer network: 1 server, 10 computers, network cards, cabling, printer, furniture, 3 CD-ROM drives	24,549	
Satellite television distribution system, 15 receivers, 15 video cassette recorders, cabling, furniture	15,092	
CCTV surveillance system	1,520	
Reconfiguration of language laboratories	1,360	
Computer and printer for project administration	1,912	
		44,433
Language learning materials		5,636
External evaluation		
Fee	2,078	
Administration costs (Cambridge)	2,613	
		4,691
Travel and subsistence		
External evaluation	1,585	
Exploratory visits to Amsterdam, Paris and Frankfurt	1,742	
EUROCALL 1994	1,580	
Third CERCLES Conference	1,046	
		5,953
Stationery, printing, photocopying, office consumables		1,983
TOTAL		**£100,000**

Appendix 4 — Band descriptors and rating sheet

Assessment Guidelines (Non-Beginners)

Expected maximum global level of attainment
Can speak at length with confidence and reasonable fluency on familiar or general topics, adapting appropriately to formal/informal contexts. Lacks facility in handling abstract or unfamiliar topics but can cope reasonably well. Difficulty with complex sentence and discourse structures.

Individual Student Assessment

CATEGORY	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Phonology:	almost unintelligible	strong L1 accent	fair L2 accent	good L2 accent and intonation	very good L2 accent and intonation
Fluency:	very slow and hesitant - frequent stops and starts	stilted and somewhat hesitant but manages to keep going	flows reasonably well despite occasional hesitations	fluent, good expression	very fluent and expressive, normal speech tempo
Grammatical control:	very little control - grammatical errors impede the message	errors frequent, difficulty with complex structures, but message intelligible	good control of basic structures, some errors in more complex structures and discourse patterns	only occasional errors, mostly in control of complex structures and discourse patterns	very few noticeable errors, competent control of complex structures and discourse patterns

Group Task Assessment

How effectively the task is executed in terms of —

content/substance
appropriate language
vocabulary range
organization
rhetorical skills
presentation skills
continuity and flow

To be marked out of 10, the presentation must fulfil TWO conditions:
(a) Students should not read from scripts (prompts, visuals, props, overhead transparencies, etc., may of course be used);
(b) The presentation must be interactive (i.e., there should be regular interaction and communication **between** the students in the group, and not just a simple sequencing of individual talks).

1	2 weak	3	4 satisfactory	5	6 good	7	8 very good	9	10 outstanding

If the presentation fails to fulfil ONE of these conditions, it can only be marked out of 8:

1	2 weak	3	4 satisfactory	5	6 good	7	8 very good

If the presentation fails to fulfil BOTH of these conditions, it can only be marked out of 6:

1	2 weak	3	4 satisfactory	5	6 good

Sample rating sheet

MODULE	DAY	GROUP	ASSESSOR
Topic:			

Individual student assessment

Name	Phonology					Fluency					Grammatical control				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Final revision															
Final revision															
Final revision															
Final revision															
Final revision															

Group Task Assessment

To be marked out of 10, the presentation must fulfil TWO conditions:
(a) Students should not read from scripts
(b) The presentation must be interactive

1	2 weak	3	4 satisfactory	5	6 good	7	8 very good	9	10 outstanding

If the presentation fails to fulfil ONE of these conditions, it can only be marked out of 8:

1	2 weak	3	4 satisfactory	5	6 good	7	8 very good

If the presentation fails to fulfil BOTH of these conditions, it can only be marked out of 6:

1	2 weak	3	4 satisfactory	5	6 good

Appendix 5 — Correlational analysis of test components

French Non-Beginners			German Non-Beginners			German Beginners		
	Group Presentation	Dictation		Group Presentation	Dictation		Group Presentation	Dictation
Dictation	**0.425139**		Dictation	**0.375993**		Dictation	**0.20419**	
C-Test	**0.420545**	0.68396	C-Test	**0.572294**	0.533901	C-Test	**0.117565**	0.805523
Written test total	**0.458111**		Written test total	**0.563065**		Written test total	**0.160559**	

Communicative test: inter-rater reliability

For the estimation of inter-rater reliability, the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula was used, based on th number of independent raters (4) and th average correlation among raters. (For full details of the procedure, see Henning, G., 1987: *A Guide to Language Testing*, Cambridge, Mass.: Newbury House, pp.82-83)

French for Non-Beginners Modules: Correlations between raters' marks

phonology	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3	fluency	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3
rater 2	0.478566			rater 2	0.451849		
rater 3	0.474273	0.537153		rater 3	0.487429	0.770671	
rater 4	0.632066	0.699134	0.494578	rater 4	0.591522	0.591546	0.618614
grammar	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3	group task	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3
rater 2	0.577794			rater 2	0.486457		
rater 3	0.539127	0.542007		rater 3	0.754427	0.598905	
rater 4	0.534124	0.552907	0.502368	rater 4	0.639769	0.38685	0.430813
total score	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3			phonology	**0.83**
rater 2	0.557626			**Inter-rater**		fluency	**0.85**
rater 3	0.67692	0.752801		**reliability**		grammar	**0.83**
rater 4	0.753184	0.704756	0.673945	**coefficients**		group task	**0.83**
						total score	**0.90**

German for Non-Beginners Modules: Correlations between raters' marks

phonology	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3	fluency	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3
rater 2	0.606134			rater 2	0.454016		
rater 3	0.593243	0.567313		rater 3	0.535745	0.549366	
rater 4	0.631713	0.448527	0.591623	rater 4	0.336497	0.186625	0.621083
grammar	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3	group task	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3
rater 2	0.651488			rater 2	0.509203		
rater 3	0.615661	0.532433		rater 3	0.361372	0.833946	
rater 4	0.507682	0.383094	0.580402	rater 4	0.807637	0.422477	0.231556
total score	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3			phonology	**0.84**
rater 2	0.77365			**Inter-rater**		fluency	**0.76**
rater 3	0.682344	0.754512		**reliability**		grammar	**0.83**
rater 4	0.721185	0.495167	0.528646	**coefficients**		group task	**0.82**
						total score	**0.89**

German for Beginners Modules: Correlations between raters' marks

phonology	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3	fluency	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3
rater 2	0.416709			rater 2	0.669049		
rater 3	0.452671	0.5482		rater 3	0.813105	0.398949	
rater 4	0.535179	0.279881	0.537289	rater 4	0.741952	0.476206	0.67477
grammar	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3	group task	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3
rater 2	0.445522			rater 2	0.700847		
rater 3	0.773572	0.367413		rater 3	0.843489	0.926926	
rater 4	0.74778	0.302857	0.661644	rater 4	0.771058	0.971041	0.886921
total score	rater 1	rater 2	rater 3			phonology	**0.77**
rater 2	0.77392			**Inter-rater**		fluency	**0.87**
rater 3	0.813873	0.87831		**reliability**		grammar	**0.83**
rater 4	0.788339	0.698459	0.791493	**coefficients**		group task	**0.96**
						total score	**0.94**